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[SSU Washington Note: The following information probably came from the Catholic Mission in Pingchuan. As a rule, Catholic priests are anti-Communist.]

A. Communist Activities in Ping Chuan (113-55, 41-01) District During the Japanese Occupation

1. During the Japanese occupation, the Communists were not very numerous or well-organized in the Pingchuan district. The guerrillas of the 8th Route Army, however, were located in the surrounding countryside, and while they did not strongly oppose the Japanese military, they were the only apparent resistance group troubling the Japanese. The Communists used guerrilla tactics to harass the Japanese, and were fortified in the hills, where the Japanese could not reach them without sending out a major expedition.

2. The Communists maintained an active underground in Pingchuan itself, and were not exposed by the local citizens. However, the populace of Pingchuan District did not aid the 8th Route Army willingly, nor did they join ranks with them. The Communist demands for food and clothing were resented because both were already scarce under Japanese occupation. Secondly, the Japanese reprisals for aiding the Communists or joining their guerrilla units were very severe. Thus, the Communists could not carry out conscription plans nor keep themselves well supplied. When the 8th Route Army was known by the Japanese to be obtaining supplies in a certain area, that area was quickly turned into a concentration camp.

B. The Russian Occupation and Increased Communist Activity

1. On 29 August, the Japanese hurriedly evacuated Pingchuan, leaving behind some small amount of arms and supplies. The Russian troops occupied the city two days later, bringing mechanized equipment with them. A small percentage of the Russian troops were of Mongolian extraction. Shortly after their entrance into the city, the Russian officers came to the Mission and, although there was no way of talking to them, they seemed very respectful and in no way harmed informants. Later, however, Russian

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soldiers entered the Mission and helped themselves to whatever they wanted. The Russian soldiers entered the homes of the townspeople and did the same. There was no brutality on the part of the soldiers reported to the informants during this looting of the town.

2. About two days after the Russian troops had arrived in Pingchuan, the 8th Route Army guerrillas came down out of the hills and paraded in review before the Russians. The city was filled with Russian troops and the 8th Route Army, although there was no visible evidence of material aid to the 8th Route on the part of the Russians. Before the end of September, most of the Russian troops had moved by train to the east. During the period that immediately followed, many gray- and yellow-uniformed Communist troops passed through Pingchuan, going eastward. These claimed to have come from Central Hopei, and had come northward because they had been told they could obtain Japanese arms in Jehol. They had been through Jehol (117-52, 40-59) and Cheng Te (117-52, 40-59), and had not yet obtained any appreciable supply of weapons. The Communists were imbued with an anti-Chiang Kai-Shek spirit by their leaders, and every day speeches were given by both Russian and Chinese Communist leaders, extolling Stalin and Mao Tse-tung. The populace of Pingchuan did not like the Communist troops because they constantly demanded food and money, and always left their billets in the peoples' homes in an almost demolished condition.

3. Communist troops claiming to be part of the New 4th Army began to come to Pingchuan in the middle of December. All were uniformed in gray but were poorly armed. The 8th Route Army troops called these newly-arrived men of the New 4th Army their 'younger brothers'. The New 4th Army troops did not stay long in Pingchuan. They claimed to have passed five railroads before coming there. After a few days they moved on eastward. Before 1 January all the Russians had left Pingchuan, and more 8th Route Army troops came through the city. The 8th Route forcibly conscripted a few men of Pingchuan and took some collaborators with them.

4. Through the first two weeks of January, the movement of 8th Route Army men continued. The National troops approached the city on 13 January, and there was some light resistance before they entered the city and the Communists fled to the hills. The Central Government troops received a hearty welcome from the townspeople. Since then, the citizens have been asking the National troops to drive the Communists from the surrounding hills in order that free movement of food and goods may be established.

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